



United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Redding Field Office
355 Hemsted Dr.
Redding, CA 96002

August 2005

**Proposed Amendment
and Environmental Assessment to Amend
the Redding Resource Management Plan
To Allow Land Sales**

CA-360-RE-2005-19

**Proposed Amendment
and Environmental Assessment to Amend
the Redding Resource Management Plan
To Allow Land Sales**



Mike Pool
BLM California State Director

8/11/05
Date



Steven W. Anderson
BLM Redding Field Office Manager

Aug 4, 2005
Date



United States Department of the Interior

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August 4, 2005

IN REPLY REFER TO:
1610 (P)
2700(P)
(CA-360)

Dear Reader:

Attached you will find an updated proposed amendment and environmental assessment (EA) to amend the Redding Resource Management Plan to allow land sales. Our State Office has provided some very good input which we have incorporated into the attached EA. The analysis and results remain the same.

We welcome your interest in this plan amendment. Please contact Ilene Emry, Realty Specialist, at (530)224-2100, or by email at: Ilene_Emry@ca.blm.gov if you have questions.

Sincerely,

Steven W. Anderson
Field Manager



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IN REPLY REFER TO:

1610 (P)

2700(P)

(CA-360)

Dear Reader:

The BLM completed a 5 year planning process in 1993 with the approval of the Redding Resource Management Plan (RMP). The RMP laid out a plan to consolidate around 1000 scattered parcels of public land in the Redding Resource Area into fewer more manageable parcels. Geographic areas of acquisition and areas of disposal were identified in the RMP. Land exchanges were chosen as the primary mechanism for accomplishing the land tenure adjustment goals of the RMP. The use of sales was not chosen as a tool because money from sales of public land would not have been available to acquire the lands identified in the RMP. Sales would not assist in meeting goals of the RMP.

Through the 1990s several land exchanges resulted in the acquisition of over 43,000 acres and disposal of approximately 38,000 acres. These exchanges ranged from assembled exchanges with many thousands of acres to smaller land exchanges including 40 to 80 acres. As required under Federal law, the value of the parcels in the exchanges was based on fair market value appraisals. Thus, any differences in value between acquisition and disposal lands were equalized by reducing acreage on either side or with a cash equalization payment to within 25% of the Federal land value.

The operation of the land tenure adjustment program of the RMP of the Redding Field Office has changed since the RMP was approved in 1993. Additionally, with the passage of Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act (FLTFA) in July of 2000, the BLM is allowed to retain proceeds from lands sales conducted pursuant to Section 203 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act to purchase lands within certain federally designated areas. Present real estate demand has created a competitive market for public land parcels available for disposal. The BLM can be more competitive in acquiring offered parcels under a sales, cash acquisition program. Selling Federal parcels through competitive bidding allows the parcels to be subjected to market forces, guaranteeing maximum compensation is received for the disposal of public resources.

This amendment updates the RMP in light of these changes. By allowing land sales to be considered on an equal footing with exchanges, the land manager is given additional flexibility in deciding how to conduct land transactions.

The final land sale amendment will be implemented following completion of a 60-day Governor's Consistency Review and a 30-day public protest period. The public protest period ends 30 days after publication of the news release of availability of the proposed RMP amendment. The Record of Decision will be signed following the Governor's Consistency Review and upon resolution of any protests on the action that may be received. Protest procedures are described at the end of the following Environmental Assessment.

We welcome your interest in this plan amendment. Please contact Ilene Emry, Realty Specialist, at (530)224-2100, or by email at: Ilene_Emry@ca.blm.gov if you have questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "S. W. Anderson", written in a cursive style.

Steven W. Anderson
Field Manager

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CHAPTER 1 PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE AMENDMENT

A. Introduction

The Redding Resource Management Plan (RMP) was approved on July 27, 1993. The RMP identifies the direction for management of public lands and Federal mineral estate administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Redding Field Office (Planning Area) in north central California. The Planning Area includes approximately 250,000 acres of public land and 142,400 acres of Federal mineral estate within Butte, Shasta, Siskiyou, Tehama, and Trinity counties. Public lands administered by BLM comprise roughly 2.5% of the entire land mass within the boundaries of the Planning Area.

The RMP delineates areas with resource values within which the existing public lands are to be retained in Federal ownership and where privately-owned lands are to be acquired by BLM through purchase, exchange or donation as opportunities arise. The RMP also identifies public lands that are scattered and difficult to manage that are to be considered as potentially suitable for disposal, subject to further site specific analysis of the resource values associated with each of the parcels. When fully implemented, the pattern of BLM public land ownership will change from over 1,000 scattered parcels to more manageable blocks of public land. The primary method that has been used for the disposal of the scattered BLM parcels and the consolidation of land in the retention areas has been the land exchange process. Since 1993, over 43,000 acres of land have been acquired and over 37,000 acres have been disposed mainly using the exchange process. As required under Federal law, the value of the parcels in the exchanges were based on fair market value appraisals. Thus, any differences in value between acquisition and disposal lands were equalized by reducing acreage on either side or with a cash equalization payment to within 25% of the Federal land value.

The BLM Redding Field Office is initiating this RMP amendment to modify the existing language to allow land sales to be used as well as exchanges in making land tenure adjustments. This amendment would not change the designation of which lands were identified for disposal in the RMP.

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of October 21, 1976 provided BLM the authority to dispose of public land either through sale or exchange. The RMP identified exchange as the method to be utilized for land tenure adjustments in the Planning Area because this method allowed for BLM to acquire lands in retention areas, while receipts generated from land sales were deposited into the general treasury and unavailable for land acquisition. Subsequent to the approval of the RMP, the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act (FLTFA) was passed on July 25, 2000, allowing for the retention of land sale receipts by BLM for use in acquiring lands in Federal designated areas.

The definition of a federally designated area under FLTFA is found at 203.3 (2) A and (2) E as follows:

(2) Federally Designated Area: The term ‘federally designated area’ means land in Alaska and the eleven contiguous Western States (as defined in section 103 (o) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1702(o))) that on the date of enactment of this Act was within the boundary of –

(A) a national monument, area of critical environmental concern, national conservation area, national riparian conservation area, national recreation area, national scenic area, research natural, national outstanding natural area, or a natural landmark managed by the Bureau of Land Management;

(E) an area within which the Secretary or the Secretary of Agriculture is otherwise authorized by law to acquire lands or interests therein that is designated as;

(i) wilderness under the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.);

(ii) a wilderness study area;

(iii) a component of the Wild and Scenic Rivers System under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (16 U.S.C. 1271 et seq.); or

(iv) a component of the National Trails System under the National Trails System Act (16 U.S.C. 1241 et seq.).

The following federally designated areas within the Redding Planning Unit meet the FLTFA criteria for acquisition:

Baker Cypress Research Natural Area (RNA)/Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)

Deer Creek ACEC

Forks of Butte Creek Outstanding Natural Area (ONA)/ACEC

Hawes Corner RNA

Sacramento Island RNA/ACEC

Sacramento River (Bend Area) ACEC

Swasey ACEC

Components of the Wild and Scenic River System

Trinity River

North Fork Trinity River

Klamath River

B. Purpose and Need to Amend the RMP

The purpose of the amendment is to modify the land use plan to allow sales as tool for land tenure adjustment to consolidate the many scattered parcels of public land in the resource area into a few manageable units. The amendment would provide for the sale of public land already identified in the RMP, in addition to disposal through exchange or under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act.

Competitive sales are needed as an efficient means to dispose of smaller scattered parcels. Exchanges have been used in the past successfully to dispose of many parcels of public land. Some of the remaining parcels may be more suitable to dispose of using sale as the method instead of exchange. Adding sales as one of the options for disposal of the identified public land gives the authorized officer the discretion of choosing the best option for each project.

C. Conformance with Land Use Plans and Relationship to Statutes, Regulations or Other Plans

Land use plan amendments are authorized in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976, as amended, and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended. Further guidance is found in BLM planning regulations found in Title 43 Code of Federal Regulations Subpart 1610.

This amendment would modify the Redding RMP, 1993, as amended, and the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act (FLTFA), 2000, as discussed below.

Chapter 2 Description of the Proposed Action and Alternatives

A. Proposed Action

The proposed action is to amend the Redding RMP to allow land sales for public land parcels of any size. The present plan restricts the use of sales only for very small tracts to resolve trespasses. Land exchanges would continue to be employed pursuant to FLPMA Section 206 (U.S.C. 1716) in some cases to transfer lands identified for disposal in the 1993 RMP. Selection of the method of disposal will remain at the discretion of the authorized officer. Those lands currently dedicated to pending land exchanges and segregated for exchange will remain available for exchange until the segregation is terminated. This amendment would not change the designation of any lands that are identified in the RMP for disposal.

We anticipate that land sales will not be concentrated in a single geographic area. It is more likely that sale parcels will be distributed throughout the various areas identified for disposal. Sales would be conducted over a period of several years (5 to 10 years or more). The FLTFA is currently scheduled to terminate on July 25, 2010.

As stated in the RMP, before land can be disposed of by any method, BLM must complete an evaluation for significant cultural resources, threatened and endangered plants and animals, mineral potential, floodplain/flood hazards, hazardous waste, and prime or unique farmland.

Specific wording in the 1993 RMP Record of Decision would be modified as follows:

Planning Issues addressed by this plan, p. 5,

- From: “Finally, land not needed by other agencies, unsuited for use in exchange programs and difficult or uneconomic to manage by the BLM, may be identified for disposal through sale authorities.”
- To: “Land not needed by other agencies, may be identified for disposal through exchange or sale authorities
- **RMP Record of Decision, Management Guidance, Lands and Realty, p. 17,**
- From: “This goal will be pursued primarily through exchange opportunities followed by some Recreation and Public Purposes Act leases and patents. Disposal of small-acreage, low-value parcels will be considered only in some cases to resolve inadvertent trespass or when subject parcels cannot reasonably be exchanged.”
- To: “This goal will be pursued through exchange, sale, and acquisition, followed by some Recreation and Public Purposes Act leases and patents in support of the objectives of the RMP.”

Scott Valley Management Area, p. 30 and 32, II. Land Use Allocations,

- From: 5. All public land interests not noted above in II A-B (1-4) are available for exchange.
- To: 5. All public land interests not noted above in II A-B (1-4) are available for exchange or sale.

Klamath Management Area, p. 36, II. Land Use Allocations, H. Remainder of Management Area:

- From: 4. Transfer via R&PP or exchange to the City of YrekaOffer for exchange to any party after two years from the approval of the Final RMP.
- To: 4. Transfer via R&PP or exchange to the City of YrekaOffer for exchange or sale to any party after two years from the approval of the Final RMP.
- From: 5. ...offer for exchange to any party after five years from the approval of the Final RMP.
- To: 5. ...offer for exchange or sale to any party after five years from the approval of the Final RMP.
- From: 6. All public land interests not noted above in II A-H (1-5) are available for exchange.
- To: 6. All public land interests not noted above in II A-H (1-5) are available for exchange or sale.

Trinity Management Area, p. 41, II. Land Use Allocations, E. Remainder of Management Area:

- From: 3. ...offer for exchange to any party after five years from the approval of the Final RMP.
- To: 3. ...offer for exchange or sale to any party after five years from the approval of the Final RMP.
- From: 5. All public land interests not noted above in II A-E (1-4) are available for exchange.
- To: 5. All public land interests not noted above in II A-E (1-4) are available for exchange or sale.

Shasta Management Area, p. 45-46, II. Land Use Allocations, F. Remainder of Management Area:

- From 1. Transfer, via the Recreation and Public Purposes Act (R&PP), four parcels of public land...If an acceptable R&PP application is not perfected within two years of the Record of Decision for this RMP the parcels will be offered for exchange.
- To: 1. Transfer, via the Recreation and Public Purposes Act (R&PP), four parcels of public land...If an acceptable R&PP application is not perfected within two years of the Record of Decision for this RMP the parcels may be offered for exchange or sale.
- From: 5. Transfer via R&PP, or exchange, to the State of California....Within two years from approval of the Final RMP the organizations mentioned above will be given an opportunity to submit R&PP applications for specific parcels prior to the land being offered for exchange. Offer for exchange to any party after two years from the approval of the final RMP.
- To: 5. Transfer via R&PP, sale, or exchange, to the State of California.... Within two years from approval of the Final RMP the organizations mentioned above will be given an opportunity to submit R&PP applications for specific parcels. Offer for exchange or sale to any party after two years from the approval of the final RMP.
- From: 8. All public land interests not noted in II A-F (1-5) are available for exchange.
- To: 8. All public land interests not noted in II A-F (1-5) are available for exchange or sale.

Sacramento River Management Area, p. 49, II. Land Use Allocations, E. Remainder of Management Area:

- From: 1. All public land interests not noted above in II A-D are available for exchange.
- To: 1. All public land interests not noted above in II A-D are available for exchange or sale.

Ishi Management Area, p. 52-53, II. Land Use Allocations, G. Remainder of Management Area:

- From: 2. Transfer via exchange, the Recreation and Public Purposes Act (R&PP, or cooperative agreement
- To: 2. Transfer via exchange, sale, the Recreation and Public Purposes Act (R&PP, or cooperative agreement
- From: 3. Transfer via exchange or R&PP...would be available for exchange or R&PP under the above conditions.
- To: 3. Transfer via exchange, sale, or R&PP...would be available for exchange, sale, or R&PP under the above conditions.
- From: 5. Transfer via R&PP or exchange to a qualified.....Offer for exchange to any party after two years from approval of the Final RMP.
- To: 5. Transfer via R&PP, sale, or exchange to a qualified.....Offer for exchange or sale to any party after two years from approval of the Final RMP.
- From: 6. Transfer via exchange or R&PP to a qualified.....Offer for exchange to any party after two years from approval of the Final RMP.
- To: 6. Transfer via exchange, sale, or R&PP to a qualified.....Offer for exchange or sale to any party after two years from approval of the Final RMP.

- From: 7. Transfer via exchange or R&PP to the State.....All lands identified by California or BLM as excess to park needs will be offered for exchange to any party after two years from approval of the Final RMP.
- To: 7. Transfer via exchange, sale, or R&PP to the State All lands identified by California or BLM as excess to park needs will be offered for exchange or sale to any party after two years from approval of the Final RMP.
- From: 8. If congressional support is unavailable, offer for exchange to any party after five years from the approval of the Final RMP.
- To: 8. If congressional support is unavailable, offer for exchange or sale to any party after five years from the approval of the Final RMP.
- From: 12. All public land interests not noted above in II A-H (1-5) are available for exchange.
- To: 12. All public land interests not noted above in II A-H (1-5) are available for exchange or sale.

Yolla Bolly Management Area, p. 55, II. Land Use Allocations,

- From: B. All public land interests not noted above in II A are available for exchange.
- To: B. All public land interests not noted above in II A are available for exchange or sale.”

B. The No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative would not amend the RMP. Land exchanges would remain the primary tool used for land tenure adjustment. Land sales would be used only in certain limited circumstances to dispose of small tracts that are not suitable for a land exchange.

C. Alternatives Considered but Dismissed from Further Analysis

Sale Only Alternative

One suggested alternative to the Proposed Action was to amend the RMP to provide solely for the sale of public land and eliminate the use of land exchanges as a means to achieve the goal of consolidating the public land ownership pattern. Flexibility in selecting the most adequate process to achieve land tenure adjustment goals is a stated need of the proposed amendment. Therefore, exchange should remain as an option.

Retention of Public Land Parcels near Streams Alternative

A comment from the public included a request to amend the RMP to retain public land that is currently identified for disposal along tributary streams of the Sacramento River, such as Upper Salt Creek in the Old Shasta area. The comment also discussed the importance of these areas to the life cycles of salmon and steelhead and that this information was not generally known when the 1993 RMP was approved. The comment stressed that these parcels should be identified for conservation and protection.

This alternative is beyond the scope of this amendment. The scope of the amendment is intentionally being limited allow disposal by sale of public lands already identified in the RMP for disposal. The amendment is not to reconsider whether any of those parcels should be retained.

CHAPTER 3 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

This chapter incorporates by reference the affected environment description from the 1995 Redding RMP (FEIS, pages 2-1 through 2-15). A summary of the physical setting is provided below.

A. Physical Setting

The Planning Area of the Redding RMP coincides to the area within the administrative jurisdiction of the Redding Field Office. The Planning Area encompasses approximately 9,914,000 acres within the north central portion of California. BLM administered public lands total approximately 250,000 acres or roughly 2.5% of the surface of the Planning Area. These public lands are generally scattered throughout the middle, and to a lesser degree, lower elevations of the planning area. The over 1,000 individual parcels of BLM administered public land identified in the RMP range in size from a fraction of an acre to several hundred acres. However, land tenure adjustments have resulted in the disposal of more than 300 individual public land parcels BLM now administers major holdings of contiguous public land in the Bend Area of Critical Environmental Concern (17,000+ acres), Interlakes Special Recreation Management Area (23,000+ acres) and the Grass Valley Creek – Deadwood Creek – West of French Gulch vicinity (30,000+ acres).

The Planning Area encompasses all or portions of the five counties of Butte, Shasta, Siskiyou, Tehama, and Trinity. Approximately one half of the planning area is privately owned land predominantly within the lower elevations or valleys. Significant area of privately owned interests are within and surrounding the Sacramento, Shasta, Butte, and Scott valleys. The public owned half of the Planning Area is dominated by the Forest Service notably the Shasta, Trinity, and Klamath and Lassen National Forests. Portions of the Mendocino and Plumas National Forests are also located within the upper elevations of the Planning Area. Other significant Federal interests within the Planning Area include: Lassen Volcanic National Park, Whiskeytown Unit of the Whiskeytown-Shasta- Trinity National Recreation Area (National Park Service), the Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge (Fish and Wildlife Service) and Black Butte Lake (Army Corps of Engineers). Significant State of California interests include Horseshoe Ranch Wildlife Area, Butte Valley Wildlife Area, Tehama Wildlife Management Area (Department of Fish Game), Latour State Forest (Department of Forestry and Fire Protection) and Lake Oroville State Recreation Area (Department of Parks and Recreation).

CHAPTER 4 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVE

Introduction

This section discusses the beneficial and negative impacts to key impact topics which are deemed relevant to this proposal, i.e. those resource values or uses that are at most risk if the proposed action or other alternative is implemented. Each analyst considered the short term, long term, direct, indirect and cumulative consequences in their analyses of their respective impact

topics. The discussion of each impact topic defines the topic; what is measured, and the consequences of selecting each alternative.

A. Tiering to the 1992 RMP Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

In accordance with Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) 40 CFR 1508.28 (a), tiering from an Environmental Impact Statement to an Environmental Assessment is appropriate when the sequence of analysis is *“From a program, plan, or policy environmental impact statement to a program, plan, or policy statement or analysis of lesser scope or to a site-specific statement or analysis”*.

On page 4-4 (Table 4-1) the 1992 Redding RMP/EIS summarized the current acreage for each county under BLM administration and the acreage that would be subject to disposal and acquisition due to full implementation of the proposed action alternative. Table 4-1 is shown below:

Disposition of Public and Private Lands Due to Full Implementation of the Proposed Action Alternative

(All numbers are acres)

County	1992 BLM Redding R.A.	Proposed Land Acquisition	Disposal To Private Sector	Disposal to Public Sector*	Net Change In Private Ownership
Butte	20,376	5,450	8,240	7,247	+2,790
Shasta	54,832	38,760	30,430	2,860	-8,330
Siskiyou	57,300	32,030	45,100	3,788	+13,070
Tehama	66,264	33,650	40,330	9,160	+6,680
Trinity	48,746	53,680	14,470	155	-39,210
TOTALS	247,518	163,570	138,570	23,210	-25,000

* a portion of these lands were made available to government entities and non-profit groups under the Recreation and Public Purpose Act (R&PP) for a period of 2 years after the approval of the RMP on July 27, 1993. The majority of these acres have not been transferred. The 2 year period elapsed with few applications received. Therefore, the acres of identified lands transferred to the public sector will be less than identified in the RMP. These parcels are now available for disposal through sale or exchange.

The total acreage disposed of within the Redding Field Office planning area is approximately 38,000 acres, while approximately 43,000 acres have been acquired. Since completion of the RMP the following acres have been acquired and disposed, shown by county:

**Disposition of Public and Private Lands
through June 30, 2005**

COUNTY	1992 BLM REDDING AREA (ACRES)	ACRES ACQUIRED*	ACRES DISPOSED*	2005 BLM REDDING AREA (ACRES)
Butte	20,376	749	2,651	18,474
Shasta	54,832	18,627	8,778	64,037
Siskiyou	57,300	1,657	15,173	43,784
Tehama	66,264	7,050	10,467	62,598
Trinity	48,746	15,732**	899	63,579
TOTAL	247,518	43,817	37,970	253,365

* Acreage is estimated.

**15,336 acres were acquired from the Trust for Public Land on March 23, 1993. The Trinity County Board of Supervisors unanimously supported this transfer to the BLM Redding Field Office. Aside from this transaction, the acres acquired in Trinity County since 1992 is approximately 392 acres.

Reasonably Foreseeable Development

A reasonably foreseeable development scenario was developed for disposal lands in the EIS to document the assumptions used in the analysis of environmental impacts. Predictions were based on an examination of existing approved land uses on adjoining parcels, and in consideration of the nature of the landscape.

The Redding Resource Area includes a resident population of more than 400,000 people. Populations vary from approximately 14,000 in Trinity County to 173,000 in Butte County. A majority of the population live in or near the Chico-Paradise-Oroville area, the Redding-Anderson area, the Sacramento River corridor of Corning-Red Bluff-Cottonwood, Weaverville, Yreka, and Weed-Mt. Shasta areas. Population growth in these areas is expected to be between 1 and 3 percent, annually. This population growth will support a moderate to high demand for land disposals and the uses anticipated after disposal.

Page 4-3 of the RMP EIS states, "Of public lands available for disposal via exchange to the private sector, between 20,000 and 70,000 acres would actually be transferred. Of this range, 1,000 to 3,000 acres would be zoned and subsequently developed for intensive land uses mainly around Redding with some private development near Weaverville and Hayfork."

Although the current acreage of lands disposed is near the midpoint of the ranges predicted by the EIS, the pattern of predicted disposals and intensity of use needs to be updated. Intensive use of the patented land have been focused around Redding as predicted in the RMP, however, disposals and subsequent intensive use of patented parcels has been limited in the areas around Weaverville and Hayfork.

Future disposals over the next ten years are likely to be concentrated in the following areas (most prevalent high intensity use shown in parenthesis): 1. Redding (residential); 2. Red Bluff (rural residential); 3. Bella Vista/Eastern Shasta County (rural residential); 4. Paradise/Magalia (rural residential/timber harvesting); 5. Hayfork (timber harvesting) . Sales would not be limited to the areas listed above and could occur in other areas, such as Yreka and western Tehama County.

Intensity of Use

On page 4-2 the RMP EIS states: “Under all land-use management alternatives, including the Proposed Action, land uses will remain non-intensive on the vast majority of public lands transferred to the private sector via exchange or, in a few cases, direct sale. Public lands transferred to the private sector will be dominated by county zoning designations for rangeland, natural habitat (40 to 80 acre minimum), timber production, agricultural and rural residential (5 to 20 acre minimum). Notable exceptions will include former public lands in or adjoining the Redding, Weaverville, and possibly Hayfork spheres of influence. County and city zoning designations in these areas will mainly include rural residential (2 to 5 acre minimum), suburban residential, public facilities (transfers to local government for public uses), and greenway.” Competitive sales would likely cause a minor shift in type and intensity of use to occur after patent in the form of increased rural residential development. Because disposals will be of smaller parcels and targeted to areas which support competitive interest, disposals will tend to occur more frequently in the areas zoned as rural residential with 5 to 20 acre minimums.

B. Critical Elements of the Human Environment

The list of critical elements below summarizes potential impacts to various elements of the human environment, listed in BLM Manual H-1790-1, Appendix 5, as amended. They are defined as: Air Quality, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, Cultural Resources, Environmental Justice, Farmlands, Floodplains, Invasive, Non-native species, Native American Concerns, Threatened and Endangered Species (Animal), Threatened and Endangered Species (Plant), Wastes (hazardous/solid), Water Quality, Wetlands/Riparian Zones, Wild and Scenic Rivers, and Wilderness. The proposed action does not affect which parcels will be disposed of, but instead allows additional opportunities for both disposal and acquisition. Direct and indirect impacts to critical elements are discussed below.

C. Environmental Impacts from the Proposed Action and the No Action Alternative

The 1992 Redding RMP/EIS, pages 4-48 to 4-50, analyzed impacts associated with the proposed action from the RMP which included acquisition and disposal of lands within the Redding planning area. Where appropriate, changes to the 1992 analysis resulting from the proposed plan amendment are discussed.

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

One of the benefits anticipated as a result of the proposed action is the ability to respond to acquisition opportunities in federally designated areas such as ACECs and Wild and Scenic River corridors. The improved capability to respond to acquisition opportunities will also assist conservation partners in securing properties on behalf of BLM. Under the proposed action (plan amendment) the rate of acquisitions is anticipated to be less than past levels, but more than would be realized under the no-action alternative.

Cultural Resources

The EIS at page 4-48 identifies the negative impacts of the proposed action as the loss of management authority of 150-700 sites (with 80-90% being non-National Register quality sites). These sites would potentially be subjected to increased impacts where less oversight and protective regulations apply. Positive impacts would result from acquisition of important archaeological sites, particularly in the Shasta Valley and along the Sacramento and Klamath Rivers.

Under both the proposed action and no-action alternatives, the overall effect of future land tenure adjustments is expected to be beneficial to the extent that acquisition efforts are improved. Screening of potential disposal parcels, under both the proposed action and the no-action alternatives, will ensure that the overall land tenure program is beneficial or neutral in terms of protecting cultural resources.

Deer Winter Range

Potential impacts to deer winter range are discussed in detail in the RMP/EIS on pages 4-38 and 4-39. The deer winter ranges analyzed in the RMP/EIS are: 1) Hayfork; 2) Weaverville; and 3) Whiskeytown. Impacts to deer winter ranges are highly dependent upon the lands retained and improvements and activities conducted on the lands retained under federal ownership. The proposed land use plan amendment does not change either of these factors and therefore will not have an impact on deer winter ranges. The no-action alternative is also not expected to have an impact on deer winter ranges.

Fuels Management/Fire Safety

There is a growing cost to administering small federal parcels surrounded by private land. Small isolated parcels are more likely to add to the wildland urban interface and complicate fuels management and fire safety efforts. To the extent that the proposed action will allow smaller parcels to be transferred from public to private ownership, a beneficial impact can be realized by reducing the amount of wildland urban interface and reducing encroachment and enforcement problems. The proposed action will have a beneficial impact that is greater than the no-action alternative, due to the increased flexibility allowing BLM to initiate sales which help to resolve wildland urban interface problems as well as encroachment and law enforcement issues.

Scenic Quality

Scenic quality will be maintained in those areas where lands are acquired, retained and managed for scenic values. Specifically, areas within the Trinity River Corridor, Sacramento River Area, Klamath River (middle and upper segments), Shasta River canyon, Horseshoe Ranch, the viewsheds of the Whiskeytown Unit of the National Recreation Area, Shasta Dam Scenic Drive, and the Forks of Butte Creek Recreation Area, would be managed under a Visual Resource Management Class II prescription. The RMP/EIS weighs the scenic values preserved in areas acquired, retained, and managed versus those areas where scenic values may be degraded over the long term due to disposal and development. The RMP found that the cumulative effect would be an overall enhancement of scenic values. Disposals and acquisitions would continue to be balanced and acquisitions would continue to occur in areas designated by the RMP under both the proposed action and no-action alternatives. At this stage in the implementation of the land tenure program, neither alternative would affect scenic quality or alter the conclusions in the RMP/EIS.

Threatened and Endangered Species

Discussion of potential threatened and endangered species impacts in the 1992 EIS is limited to salmonid habitat, slender orcutt grass, and spotted owl. The proposed amendment is an administrative action that changes the method of disposal of a portion of lands identified in the RMP. There will be no effect on salmonid habitat, slender orcutt grass, spotted owl, or other threatened and endangered species from either the proposed amendment or the no action alternative.

Anadromous Salmonid Habitat

On page 4-18 the RMP/EIS states, “Prohibition of mineral location, restrictions on size and type of mineral collection equipment and designation of critical salmonid habitat as Area of Critical Environmental Concern would result in enhanced long-term protection of anadromous habitat.”

The EIS found that, although beneficial, the consequences of BLM approved actions would be imperceptible within the Klamath and Shasta River systems. This is due mainly to the relative lack of BLM administered habitat. Within the Sacramento River, BLM actions, when viewed in concert with the planned actions of others would have a minor stabilizing impact on the anadromous fisheries mainly due to the enhancement of Clear Creek. Protection of key habitat in the Trinity River system would complement the overall effort to restore anadromous fisheries.

The proposed plan amendment would produce greater beneficial effects than the no-action alternative to the extent that acquisition efforts can be accelerated and focused on anadromous habitat. However, the differences in impacts between the proposed action and no-action alternatives are not anticipated to be significant.

Slender Orcutt Grass

The RMP/EIS described the impacts of the proposed action alternative as beneficial due to acquisition or cooperative management of areas identified as suitable habitat. On page 4-48, the RMP describes the effects of the proposed action, “Overall, this alternative would ensure the perpetuation of the species principally due to the actions of BLM and their cooperators.” The land use plan amendment to allow sales is not anticipated to change this conclusion. As slender orcutt grass habitat is already in Federal ownership and is protected by an ACEC designation.

Spotted Owl

The EIS states at page 4-49, “Coupled with other Federal, state, and private actions, the cumulative impact of this land-use management alternative would be insignificant to the Resource Area spotted owl population.” The proposed RMP amendment will not have any affect on the conclusion made by the 1992 EIS and is not anticipated to have any direct or indirect consequences for spotted owl habitat. The no-action alternative, if selected, would continue the land tenure program as described in the 1992 EIS, and the analysis would remain valid.

Waterfowl Wetland Habitat

Impacts from the proposed action are identified by the EIS to occur in two locations, Klamath Management Area (Shasta Valley Wetlands) and Sacramento River Management Area (page 4-50). Impacts were considered to be beneficial based on the degree of acquisition of wetlands that occurred. For example, if lands in the Shasta Valley wetlands were acquired and managed for increases in the acreage of waterfowl habitat, increases in waterfowl production would be expected.

Wild and Scenic Rivers

Wild and Scenic Rivers are not directly analyzed in the 1992 EIS, although salmonid habitat and scenic quality are discussed for certain areas which are currently components of the Wild and Scenic River system. The proposed plan amendment would provide additional opportunities of acquiring sensitive properties. The no action alternative would continue the current methods of land tenure adjustment.

Wilderness

The Redding Field Office planning area contains one designated Wilderness Area (Tunnel Ridge). Wilderness is also a federally designated area under FLTFA and a critical element. There is minimal private acreage available for acquisition within the Tunnel Ridge Wilderness.

D. Cumulative Impacts of the Proposed Amendment

Cumulative impacts, as defined by Council of Environmental Quality regulations in 40 Code of Federal Regulations 1508.7, are “the impacts on the environment which result from the

incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (Federal or non-Federal) or persons undertakes such other actions.” The cumulative effects of the proposed amendment and no action alternative are described below.

Incremental effects of the proposed amendment:

The adverse impacts of the proposed amendment identified in this tiered EA are primarily the result of the indirect impacts of privatization of public lands and their subsequent residential, industrial, and commercial development: increased noise, traffic, vehicle emissions, dust, soil erosion and runoff.

Adverse effects are short term (construction related) and long term (present after development is complete). Both the short term and long term adverse effects are minor and are the normal result of converting undeveloped lands to more intensive uses. BLM assumes that potential adverse effects could be further reduced or eliminated in accordance with local development permit requirements.

The proposed amendment would have the beneficial effect of the added flexibility by the authorized officer to choose the appropriate method for land tenure adjustment that would allow expeditious acquisition of private lands in identified acquisition areas of the RMP that may otherwise be lost to development.

Other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions:

A reasonably foreseeable development scenario was developed for disposal lands in the EIS to document the assumptions used in the analysis of environmental impacts. Predictions were based on an examination of existing approved land uses on adjoining parcels, and in consideration of the nature of the landscape.

The Redding Resource Area includes a resident population of more than 400,000 people. Populations vary from approximately 14,000 in Trinity County to 173,000 in Butte County. A majority of the population live in or near the Chico-Paradise-Oroville area, the Redding-Anderson area, the Sacramento River corridor of Corning-Red Bluff-Cottonwood, Weaverville, Yreka, and Weed-Mt. Shasta areas. Population growth in these areas is expected to be between 1 and 3 percent, annually. This population growth will support a moderate to high demand for land disposals and the uses anticipated after disposal.

Page 4-3 of the RMP EIS states, “Of public lands available for disposal via exchange to the private sector, between 20,000 and 70,000 acres would actually be transferred. Of this range, 1,000 to 3,000 acres would be zoned and subsequently developed for intensive land uses mainly around Redding with some private development near Weaverville and Hayfork.”

Although the current acreage of lands disposed is near the midpoint of the ranges predicted by the EIS, the pattern of predicted disposals and intensity of use needs to be updated. Intensive use of the patented land have been focused around Redding as predicted in the RMP, however,

disposals and subsequent intensive use of patented parcels has been limited in the areas around Weaverville and Hayfork.

Future disposals over the next ten years are likely to be concentrated in the following areas (most prevalent high intensity use shown in parenthesis): 1. Redding (residential); 2. Red Bluff (rural residential); 3. Bella Vista/Eastern Shasta County (rural residential); 4. Paradise/Magalia (rural residential/timber harvesting); 5. Hayfork (timber harvesting) . Sales would not be limited to the areas listed above and could occur in other areas, such as Yreka and western Tehama County.

Effects of the proposed amendment when added to effects of other actions:

The adverse effects of the proposed amendment would only slightly increase the cumulative adverse effects of overall development in the resource area. The maximum area of disposal will remain the same as under the RMP. However, the rate of disposal of federal land and subsequent development is expected to increase slightly. This is a result of greater flexibility for BLM to consider various methods of disposal rather than limiting disposal to exchange only. Therefore the cumulative of the proposed amendment would be minor.

Local planning officials have indicated that the Redding area has been expanding rapidly and development is expected to continue for the foreseeable future. Some other areas of the resource area are also expanding while some are not. The amendment would have the beneficial effect of disposing of public lands that are best suited to be private lands while acquiring private lands in the identified acquisition areas of the RMP for better management.

Federal lands identified for disposal in the resource area do not contain sensitive or significant resource values that would be more appropriate for federal management. The lands are generally suitable for development. Effects similar to those identified for the no action alternative are anticipated for the proposed amendment. BLM has initiated a number of other disposal actions in the Redding area with similar indirect effects, including exchange of approximately 100 acres in connection with an existing sand and gravel operation. The plan amendment would provide greater flexibility to dispose of land in the Redding area through competitive sales. It is not anticipated that the overall effect on land use will be any different than under the current RMP direction emphasizing exchanges.

Screening of potential disposal parcels, under both the proposed action, will ensure that the overall land tenure program is beneficial or neutral in terms of protecting resources.

E. Monitoring

Monitoring of implementation of the land tenure program will be accomplished through annual reports which will be reviewed by BLM management and contrasted with the goals and objectives of the RMP. Adjustments will be made annually, based upon these reports, to allocate staff time and other resources to meet program objectives.

CHAPTER 5 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

A Notice of Intent was published in the Federal Register on April 11, 2005, requesting comments for the proposed RMP amendment. A press release was sent to all five counties in the resource area (Siskiyou, Trinity, Shasta, Tehama, and Butte). Notice was published in the Siskiyou Daily News on May 3, 2005 and the Redding Record Searchlight on May 7, 2005. The Notice of Intent was sent to approximately 96 people for the proposed project on April 26, 2005. These included the governor, governmental agencies, adjacent land owners, right-of-way holders, Native American groups, and other interested parties. The BLM received comments from 9 commenters. Most of the comments received were related to interest in buying public land. A public meeting was not held for this project due to the administrative nature of the proposed action and the comments received. Steve Anderson, Field Manager, and Francis Berg, Assistant Field Manager presented information to the Trinity County Board of Supervisors on the RMP amendment to allow sales on July 5, 2005. Comments from the audience and the Board were positive since sales of public land would provide an increase in property taxes and therefore revenue to the County.

Persons and Agencies Consulted

Office of Planning and Research, California State Clearinghouse
Office of Historical Preservation
State Lands Commission
US Environmental Protection Agency
Trinity County Board of Supervisors
Western Lands Project

Prepared by:	Ilene Emry	BLM Realty Specialist
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Eric Ritter, PhD	BLM Archaeologist
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Bill Kuntz	BLM Recreation Planner
John Borgic	BLM Forester
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Joy Wehking	BLM California State Office, Lands and Realty

REVIEWED BY:

Ilene Emry
Realty Specialist

8/4/05
Date

U.S.D.I. BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Redding Field Office

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

NAME of PROJECT: Amendment of the Redding 1993 Resource Management Plan to Allow Land Sales

Environmental impacts associated with the proposed action have been assessed by an interdisciplinary team of staff specialists. All impacts were considered in accordance with Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) 1508.27. Based on the analysis provided in the attached environmental assessment CA-360-2005-19, I conclude that the approved action as stipulated is not a major Federal action and will result in no significant impacts to the environment. In addition, the approved action will not result in any unnecessary or undue degradation of Federal lands. Preparation of an environmental impact statement to further analyze possible impacts is not required pursuant to Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.

A. The following items have been considered to evaluate intensity:

1. Impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse. A significant effect may exist even if the Federal agency believes that on balance the effect will be beneficial.

Beneficial effects of the expanded use of land sales for land tenure adjustments are mainly administrative. The cumulative size and the dispersed locations of the remaining acreage to be disposed minimize the potential for significant effects to the human environment.

2. The degree to which the proposed action affects public health and safety.

The proposed action has no direct effect on public health and safety. Public health and safety may be improved indirectly by the disposal of isolated parcels to private ownership and subsequent improvement of hazard fuels management.

3. Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.

This amendment is designed to more efficiently dispose of small, remote, and hard to manage public land parcels. The nature of the parcels is that they do not possess unique environmental characteristics. Effects to any unique or critical elements of the human environment will be analyzed individually for each proposed sale. No significant negative effect will accrue to any critical element of the environment.

4. The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.

The planning process has involved a full spectrum of the general public. A Governor's consistency review is part of the process. No opposition has been expressed to the use of land sales for land tenure adjustments following the Notice of Intent for this amendment. The proposed action is not controversial.

5. The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risk.

Land sales involve some level of uncertainty with respect to the reasonably foreseeable future development scenario. Uncertainty is highest when attempting to anticipate the ultimate end use of a single parcel or area over the long term. These attempts are further complicated when considering that development of a parcel or area may go through several phases. The analysis of potential future development for the plan amendment does not attempt to look at any one parcel but attempts to predict the future land use trends of the program as a whole. By analyzing broader trends, uncertainty is minimized. Regardless of the ultimate use, whether it is residential, urban residential, timber or other commercial production, or open space, the effects of land sales and the ultimate uses on the human environment are not highly uncertain and do not involve unique or unknown risks.

6. The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.

The plan amendment will guide future projects with the respect to land tenure adjustments. The long term effects of the land tenure program have been analyzed in the 1992 RMP EIS. Because this amendment is designed to ease the transfer of relatively small land tracts, no precedent is established for transactions with significant effects or a decision in principle.

7. Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant, but cumulatively significant, impacts. Significance exists if it is reasonable to anticipate a cumulatively significant impact on the environment. Significance cannot be avoided by terming an action temporary or by separating it into small component parts.

Cumulative impacts of land disposals and acquisitions are evaluated in light of activities of other Federal and State agencies, as well as non-profit cooperators. The activities of these entities do not add an appreciably to the impacts which are being analyzed. The impacts of these cumulative land acquisition and disposal activities are not expected to be significant and are not related to any other action with significant cumulative impacts.

8. The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic

Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources.

Implementation of the amendment to enable land sales will not affect scientific, cultural or historical resources to an extent that would be considered significant. Individual sales will be analyzed for effects to cultural, scientific or historical resources. Separate assessments of significance will be performed and documented for individual sales.

9. The degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1993.

No endangered or threatened species or critical habitat will be affected over an area that would create a significant effect by the proposed action. Adverse effects of land tenure decisions are analyzed for each transaction and land tenure transaction effects would be limited in extent to less than significant.

10. Whether the action threatens a violation of Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.

The proposed action does not threaten a violation of Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.

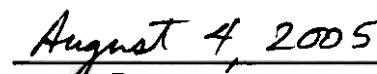
B. Public Interest Determination

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) manages Federal lands in the public interest. The transfer of properties to consolidate ownership for the purpose of management efficiency takes into account a broad area of public interest. The public involvement process enables the Bureau to identify legitimate public issues and evaluate the environmental effects to determine the alternative that best serves the public within the jurisdictional area. Sales may simplify the process of disposal of Federal lands that have limited resource values, expediting acquisition of land that have more important resource and recreational management opportunities. Therefore, I find that this action is in the public interest.

C. Land Use Plan Conformance

A primary objective of the Redding RMP is to transform the scattered land base of the Redding Field Office area into consolidated resource management units. The land sale process will be an additional tool to meet this objective. Lands identified as being isolated from other Federal lands that are difficult to manage or have low resource values may be exchanged or sold allowing acquisition of lands having greater public benefits. This amendment does not change any land use designations. For these reasons, the proposed amendment is in conformance with the RMP.


Steven W. Anderson
Redding Field Office Manager


Date

Protest Procedures

The BLM planning process offers an opportunity for administrative review. Any participant in the planning process who has an interest that is or may be adversely affected by the proposed decisions may file a protest in writing with the BLM Director.

This resource management plan amendment is subject to BLM regulations in 43 CFR Part 1610.5-2. The BLM draft amendment has been available for a 30-day public comment period beginning on the date of publication in the Federal Register. All comments were considered in the preparation of this Proposed Amendment to the RMP.

Dates: The proposed land use change amendment described in this environmental assessment will be available for review and a 30-day protest period. The protest period will begin on the date of the news release on the availability of the proposed amendment. News releases will be distributed to news media in the 5 county area of the Redding Resource Area which includes Shasta, Trinity, Tehama, Siskiyou, and Butte.

Only those persons or organizations that participated in the planning and analysis process may protest the decisions in the Proposed Amendment. Protests may raise only the issues that were previously submitted for the record during the planning and environmental analysis process by the protestor or another participant in the process. To be considered complete, a protest must include at a minimum the following information:

1. The name, mailing address, telephone number, and interest of the person filing the protest.
2. A statement of the part or parts of the plan and the issues being protested. To the extent possible, this should be done by reference to specific pages, paragraphs, sections, tables, or maps included within the Proposed Amendment and EA.
3. A copy of all documents addressing the issue(s) that the protesting party submitted during the planning process or a statement of the date they were discussed for the record.
4. A concise statement explaining why the BLM State Director's decision is believed to be incorrect (a critical part of the protest).
5. Take care to document all relevant facts and to reference or cite the planning documents, environmental analysis documents, and available planning records (Meeting minutes, summaries, correspondence). A protest without data will not provide us with the benefit of your information and insight, and the Director's review will be based on the existing analysis and supporting data.

Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name or street address from public review or from disclosure under Freedom of Information Act, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your written comment. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals

identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

At the end of the 30-day protest period or upon resolution of any protest, the Record of Decision will be signed.

Addresses: All protests must be filed only with the Director of the BLM and submitted by mail or overnight mail as follows:

The preferred mailing address is: Director, Bureau of Land Management, Attn: Ms. Brenda Williams, Protest Coordinator (WO 210/LS-1075); PO Box 66538; Washington, DC 20035. The address for overnight mail is: Director, Bureau of Land Management, Attn: Ms. Brenda Williams, Protest Coordinator (WO 210); 1620 L Street, NW., Room 1075, Washington, DC 20036. Phone: (202) 452-5110.

To ensure that any protest is properly tracked, **please also send a copy to:** BLM Redding Field Office; Attn: Ilene Emry; 355 Hemsted Dr.; Redding, CA 96002

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ilene Emry, Realty Specialist, BLM Redding Field Office (530) 224-2100; or by email at iemry@ca.blm.gov.

IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD

The final land sale amendment will be implemented following completion of a 60-day Governor's Consistency Review and a 30-day public protest period. . The public protest period ends 30 days after publication of the news release of availability of the proposed RMP amendment. The Record of Decision will be signed following the Governor's Consistency Review and upon resolution of any protests on the action that may be received.

the audience and the Board were positive. The environmental assessment was sent to the mailing list noted above. A press release was published on September 16, 2005, in the five counties affected by the amendment, announcing the beginning of the protest period. The protest period ended on October 17, 2005.

PROTESTS

No protests were received.

GOVERNOR'S CONSISTENCY REVIEW AND LOCAL PLAN CONSISTENCY

The proposed amendment environmental assessment was submitted to the State Clearinghouse on August 24, 2005 for a Governor's Consistency Review. This office received a response from the State Clearing House dated October 3, 2005 stating that the amendment had been sent to selected state agencies for review. One response was received from the California Department of Transportation regarding non transferability of encroachment permits to new owners. The State Clearinghouse letter also stated that this office has complied with the State Clearinghouse review requirements for environmental documents.

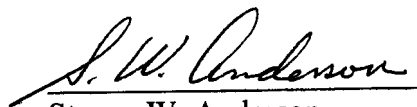
Because the proposed plan amendment does not change the lands identified for disposal, the amended RMP would remain consistent with state and local land use plans.

DECISION APPROVED BY:


Mike Pool
California State Director
Bureau of Land Management

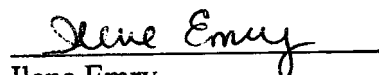
11/15/05
Date

RECOMMENDED BY:


Steven W. Anderson
Field Manager
BLM, Redding Field Office

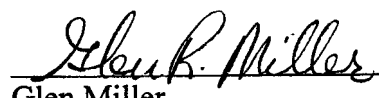
Oct 26, 2005
Date

PREPARED BY:


Ilene Emry
Realty Specialist
BLM, Redding Field Office

Oct. 26, 2005
Date

REVIEWED BY:


Glen Miller
Environmental Coordinator
BLM, Redding Field Office

Oct. 26, 2005
Date